



WP5 JOINT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Background

In order to maintain common European competitiveness and employment, the most important political action is to enhance entrepreneurship at the European level. The common feature of the EU countries is micro- and family businesses that operate mostly on the so called domestic market. European female entrepreneurship is united by micro- entrepreneurship and often the motive to start a business is to employ oneself in the traditional service sector.

The internal Market of the EU as one large market area is a big unutilized opportunity for the growth of companies owned by women and for international competitiveness. The similarities and differences of entrepreneurial cultures in different countries are at the same time strengths and weaknesses. By taking interest in the matter jointly and by creating new operating models, it is possible to open new channels for multicultural entrepreneurship, to export know-how and to offer new markets for entrepreneurs.

This new opportunity should be made concrete and visible. The growth of female entrepreneurship and internationalization need services originating from women. It becomes a success by motivating the entrepreneurs and making it possible for them to participate in the development work. The FEM-project is a cooperative project and in the WP 5 the experiences of the entrepreneurs are of utmost importance for the success of the project.

All 5 Work Packages (WP) of the FEM-project support female entrepreneurship. Internationalization is a process that needs cooperation between many actors. The WP 5 of the FEM-project concentrates on creating business contacts in close cooperation with the other WPs. It may be considered that the FEM-project has a bigger function than to increase cooperation of female entrepreneurship in the Baltic region. Best practises of the project and those of the FEM partner countries can be transferred to other EU countries as well. Step by step it will be possible to develop a common European female entrepreneurship. There will be commonly created and accepted tools and operating models to enhance female entrepreneurship.

Mission:

Increase social appreciation and significance of female entrepreneurship in the EU Structural Policy and its every Member State.

Vision 2007:

The FEM-project has started a common development programme for female entrepreneurship in the EU Member States in order to develop common information services, to create new partnership models within and between member states as well as to strengthen the Resource Centres to become conveying organisations for the contacts of small entrepreneurs.

Duties:

In the FEM-project, the main duty of WP 5 is to make the central key issues that are connected with internationalization visible and to find out how the current business services function and how business service organisations answer the out coming problems and questions. In order to get an overall picture of the internationalization of female entrepreneurs, it is important to find out the needs of entrepreneurs and

to give the information to the other WPs of the project. It is therefore of utmost importance to get entrepreneurs to participate in the project.

Objectives:

1. To encourage female entrepreneurs to seek new ways of developing business opportunities through internationalization. This will be done by offering them training, lectures and seminars, by gathering peer groups, ideation- and mentoring groups and by arranging business visits between partner countries.
2. To chart the actual requirements, wishes and obstacles of female entrepreneurs, the current services that different organisations have to offer and the equivalence between them.
3. To utilize the possibilities of IT-technology for broadening markets for small entrepreneurs by creating technical readiness for using e-store and the internet when creating business contacts as well as to lower the threshold of entrepreneurs to use the internet.
4. To spread and convey positive information of good examples to female entrepreneurs, about development needs to the authorities as well as to produce material about functioning and non-functioning services when developing them to serve internationalization.
5. To develop as a pilot experiment common business activities by creating business networks and business clusters of entrepreneurs in the partner countries and help them to start and continue cooperation.

Measures to achieve the objectives

Internationalization is a development process which should be supported at the local, national and international level. As enclosure to this strategy-document there are the measures which will be implemented during the project as well as the important questions that each WP 5 partner should solve at the local and national level considering the needs of the entrepreneurs of one's own country.

(Enclosure 1 PowerPoint/Tools WP 5)

Enclosure 2 PowerPoint/GuideBook WP 5

Values and principles that WP 5 follows in business contacts

1. Experience

Practical knowledge and experiences of the entrepreneurs should be the starting point when assessing current situation and the necessary development measures. This starting point guarantees the best prerequisites for the project to succeed and be productive and concrete.

2. Effectiveness

Listening to the entrepreneurs and answering to their needs and solving their problems motivate the entrepreneurs to participate in the project and its measures. The results of participation can be measured at once, usefulness of contacts, becoming aware of new business ideas and their suitability.

3. Participation in decision-making

Low organisation of the project and getting acquainted with the cooperation partners in different countries strengthen mutual relations and help creating such common operating models that suit the business culture and political atmosphere of all partners.

4. Equality

All entrepreneurs are equal, the current situations and starting points of all partners are taken into account. In entrepreneurship small is valuable and to create opportunities for growth for all branches

and companies of all sizes will be materialized in the internationalization process of female entrepreneurship as an all pervious principle.

5. Joint responsibility

The complex of problems and everyday entrepreneurship are the same kind regardless of the country. Joint responsibility is divided and received when visiting the partner countries and meeting entrepreneurs. Joint responsibility is also appreciation and awareness of another culture when creating and establishing new business contacts.

6. Cooperation

Enhancing entrepreneurship means cooperation between many different actors from which benefit the entrepreneur herself, the developing organisation and even society. The entrepreneur commits herself to give time and experience for the development of common social issues and in the end the whole nation benefits from it all.

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